

T H E
S P E E C H
O F

Mr. William Plessington.

Who was EXECUTED at

C H E S T E R

(For being a Priest of the Church of Rome) July 19. 1679.

Dear Countrymen.

I Am here to be executed, neither for *Theft, Murder*, nor any thing against the *Law of God*, nor any fact or *Doctrine* inconsistent with *Monarchy* or *Civil Government*, I suppose several now present heard my Tryal the last *Affizes*, and can testify that nothing was laid to my charge but *Priest-hood*, and I am sure that you will find that *Priest-hood* is neither against the *Law of God* nor *Monarchy*, or *Civil Government*. If you will consult either the *Old* or *New Testament*, (for it is the Basis of Religion) for no *Priest* no Religion, S. Paul tells us in *Hebrews*, the 7. and 12. The *Priest-hood* being changed, there is made also of necessity a change of the *Law*, and consequently the *Priest-hood* being abolish'd, the *Law* and Religion is quite gone.

But I know it will be said, that a *Priest* ordain'd by authority derived from the *See of Rome*, is by the *Law of the Nation* to die as a *Traitor*, but if that be so what must become of all the *Clergy-men* of the *Church of England*, for the first *Protestant Bishops*, had their *Ordination* from those of the *Church of Rome*, or none at all, as appears by their own writers, so that *Ordination* comes derivatively to those now living.

As in the *Primitive times*, *Christians* were esteemed *Traitors*; and suffered as such by *National Laws*, so are the *Priests of the Roman Church*, here esteemed and, suffer as such. But as *Christianity* then was not against the *Law of God*, *Monarchy*, or *Civil Policy*, so now there is not any one *Point* of the *Roman Catholique Faith*, (of which Faith I am) that is inconsistent therewith, as is evident by induction in each several Point.

That

That the Pope hath power to depose or give license to Murder Princes, is no point of our *Beliefe*. And I protest in the sight of God and the Court of Heaven, that I am absolutely innocent of the Plot so much discourse of, and abhor such bloody and damnable designs, and although it be Nine Weeks since I was sentenced to die, there is not any thing of that laid to my charge, so that I may well take comfort in S. Peters words, 1 Pet. 14, 15, 16. Let none of you suffer as a Murderer, or as a Thief, or as an Evil doer, or as a Busie Body in other mens matters, yet if any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed or Sorry. I have deserved a worse death, for though I have been a faithful and true Subject to my King, I have been a grievous sinner against God; Theeves and Robbers that Rob on Highways, would have served God in a greater perfection then I have done had they received so many favours and graces from him as I have.

But as there was never sinner who truly repented and heartily called to Jesus for mercy, to whom he did not shew mercy; so I hope by the merits of his Passion, he will have mercy on me, who am heartily sorry that ever I offended him.

Bear witness good hearers, that I profess that I undoubtedly and firmly believe all the Articles of the Roman Catholique Faith, and for the truth of any of them, (by the assistance of God) I am willing to die, and I had rather die then doubt of any Point of Faith, taught by our Holy Mother the Roman Catholique Church.

In what condition Margaret Plat one of the chiefest witnesses against me was before, and after she was with me, let her neereſt relations declare.

George Massey, another witness swore falsely, when he swore, I gave him the Sacrament, and said Mass at the time and place he mentioned, and I verily think that he never spoke to me, or I to him, or saw each other but at the Assizes week; the Third witness Robert Wood was suddenly killed, but of the Dead why should I speak? These were all the witnesses against me, unless those that only declared what they heard from others. I heartily and freely forgive all that have been or are any way instrumental to my Death, and heartily desire that those that are living may heartily repent.

God bless the King and the Royal Family and grant his Majesty a prosperous Reign here and a Crown of glory hereafter, God grant peace to the Subjects, and that they live and die in true Faith, Hope, and Charity, That which remains is, that I recomend my self to the mercy of my Jesus by whose merits I hope for mercy, O Jesu be to me a Jesus.

F I N I S.